



MONITOR

THE CONSERVATION, ENVIRONMENTAL
AND ANIMAL WELFARE CONSORTIUM

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Mr. Robert Brumsted, Acting Director
Office of Protected Species
National Marine Fisheries Service
3300 Whitehaven, NW
Washington, DC 20235

May 15, 1985

Re: Permit Application P2P Sea World, Inc.

Dear Mr. Brumsted,

The following member organizations support the contents of this letter:

American Cetacean Society
American Humane Association
American Society for the Prevention
of Cruelty to Animals
Animal Protection Institute of America
Animal Welfare Institute
Connecticut Cetacean Society
The Fund for Animals
Greenpeace U.S.A.
The Humane Society of the United States
International Fund for Animal Welfare
Living Ocean Society
Society for Animal Protective Legislation

We have several questions concerning the above-referenced permit application of Sea World to acquire from Kamogawa Sea World, Japan, six young adult pseudorcas (false killer whales) over the next three years.

(1) Longevity in captivity

The permit application states that the pseudorcas will be able to live longer in captivity than they would in the wild. While some pseudorcas appear to adapt to a captive environment, we request scientific data that would support this statement. (The six pseudorcas Sea World currently owns are no indicators of longevity in captivity since four were acquired in 1983 and two in 1985.)

P2P

Rec'd 5/17/85

(2) Capture techniques

While it is not explicitly stated, it is implied that Kamogawa Sea World will be responsible for the capture of these mammals. Please advise for how long a time the animals will be under the control of the Japanese company before they are trans-shipped to the United States. The latter process, according to the permit application, is expected to take 35 hours. Will the capture process be regulated by the Japanese government, and if so, what are the guidelines? Will the taking provisions of the U.S. Marine Mammal Protection Act be applied in the captures?

(3) Selection of animals

Cetacean experts (Leatherwood and others) appear to agree that pseudorcas are highly social animals whose herds are comprised of many animals of both sexes and all groups. What selection process is going to be used to choose the six animals over the next three years? Will two per year be taken from the same herd? Or will the six animals be taken from entirely separate agglomerations? Further, will larger numbers be captured in the process of selecting the six to be trans-shipped?

(4) Display arrangements

It has been observed in the wild that pseudorcas sometimes associate with other cetaceans, such as tursiops (bottlenose dolphins). Are the new Sea World pseudorcas to be kept in the same pools with currently-held dolphins? Are they going to be placed in the same pools with any of the eight orcas (killer whales) that Sea World now has? Will these new animals be kept together as a unit, or will they be distributed among Sea World's three facilities -- Orlando, San Diego, and Aurora? Or will these new animals be intermingled with the six pseudorcas already owned by Sea World?

(5) Breeding in captivity

The permit application states that the purpose of the application and capture is for "public display." It does not mention captive breeding. Does Sea World intend to attempt to breed these animals?

We recommend that this permit application not be approved in its present form until answers to the above questions are made satisfactorily.

Sincerely,



Craig Van Note
Executive Vice President